Jones Harris plant of story that Warren Commission suppressed what FBI gave it on a false Oswald in USSR. HW 2/25/75

After reading the long NYTimes story in NYC Sunday, the daye it appeared (2/23) I phoned the Times' National Desk and spoke to the assistant national editor, who took my phone and spoke to the reporter. Ben A. Franklin. On hearing from Lil that I had a call from the Times when I got back to D.C. Monday I phoned Franklin from Lesar's.

Franklin has been besieged by the nuts, more than two dozen. He also is reluctant to get into the substance of the assassination story. But indicated he might welcome an investigatory challenge. I spoke to him rather frankly for about 45 minutes. He ordered a copy of WWIV that JL sent last night. In today's mail I had a note and a check in payments that instead of the closing complimentary says "Yes."

I told him I had no complaint with the story, believed it would help people understand that there are questions and that it is a perfectly proper and completely accurate story, but wonder why he had not been informed that there is virtually nothing new in it and that it coincides in time with the attack on the memory of JEHoover, who it defends. I also told him that whether or not any WC staffer had seen this particular State/FBI document there was no staffer not aware of the essence and none can be innocent.

On timing, Harris spoke to them in August. The delay is because the Times did not believe it worth the cost of sending him to California so he waited Slawson's coming to DC. Slawson was originally reluctant to say anything.

Franklin has unarticulated but not unindicated doubts about Rankin and Willens, both of whom went to the see the whole FBI Oswald file despite the Commission's decision not to accept and examine it. (Franklin had read the transcript of Belmont's appearance.)

Franklin had spoken to CIA about Slawson. CIA phoned Slawson and lied about what Franklin had said about him when it phoned Slawson. He is pissed off, his word. He finds it unusual that they had to talk to Slawson at all.

(When I spoke to Martin Waldron Monday night he agreed the timing coincides with the Hoover campaign and had noted it himself.)

I told Franklin I had written in detail about the "False Oswald" prior to 2/15/65, had later added to this, all from the non-secret, and that Jones Harris knew of this. I also told him that the Commission had the account of the negotiations for the purchase of vehicles for Cuba, when Oswald was in USSR, in his name - and that the FBI had withheld the documentary substantiation received from Bolton Ford, N.O. He referred to the "Speculations and Rumors" dealing with LHO and a car and I said that was an entirely different matter also handled less than fully or honestly. There are dozens of such false identification of Oswald of which the Commission and the FBI knew, never really ever investigated. Or, other than that this is something Hoover wrote, not new. If "news." Hence when did Harris try this now and not until now?

Franklin believes the file held other than what would appear to be what caused Warren to decline the stuff. He referred to McCloy's comments on it and McCloy's suggestion that perhaps it should be examined.

This afternoon Steve Crowley of Panaroma (WTTG) phoned to see if I'd do the show Thursday with Jones Harris and ??? on this story. I accepted and suggested several others (nixing O'Toole). Willens, etc. He asked of Liebeler and I said "fine." It seems Liebeler is now with FTC in DC. He read me Goulden's "response" to my letter and then described Goulden's as a "shit" letter. It addresses nothing I said and that is obvious. Clearly what Goulden said had no influence on him/them.

JL is to ask Archives if the State/Hoover thing was ever classified and if so when it was released. If he can he'll get copies for me in the a.m.